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ABSTRACT

This Child Development Associate (CDA) training module is designed to help the CDA intern develop the knowledge and skills necessary for establishing an individualized program for young children. Objectives are presented, along with suggested activities for achieving each objective and an assessment checklist. Also provided is a study guide emphasizing the importance of assessing each individuals' needs, gathering and recording up-to-date information concerning each child, using family and community resources for dealing with the child's special needs; establishing appropriate goals, motivation techniques, and materials for each individual, and developing awareness of the child's progress. Forms, a list of resources for further study, and other supplemental materials are also included. (Author/MP)

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Competency Based Training Module #21

PROVIDING FOR INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

by

Margaret Roberts

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

NOTE TO THE INTERN:

This CDA training module has been prepared as a guide for you and your CDA Advisor to help you to develop certain practical skills necessary for your work in an early childhood center. Although it contains many useful ideas, it is not intended to be a self-study program. Many decisions about your training experiences are left up to you and your CDA Advisor. The activities given in this module are "suggested" activities, and should be used if they are appropriate to your learning needs. You or your Advisor may come up with other activities more appropriate for your particular situation, children, or background of experience and training.

Your Advisor will evaluate your performance in each of the objectives. S/he may do so right away on the basis of skills you already have, or s/he may evaluate you after you have done some learning activities, or both. If you think you already have the skills required by some of the objectives, you should ask to be evaluated right away. You may not have to do any activities for some of the objectives. You do, however, have to demonstrate the required skills for your advisor; you cannot just tell s/him that you have the skills. If your advisor has already observed some of the skills before you entered this module, s/he may check you off on those skills without further observation.

When your Advisor has evaluated your performance in an objective area as satisfactory, s/he will initial and date that objective as completed in your copy of this module. When all of the objectives have been initialled, you have completed the requirements of this module and have earned credit. Keep this module as your permanent record of completion, and as a reference to use in your classroom.

As you can see, how fast you are able to complete this module depends on a lot of things: how much time and effort you can put into it; how much help your Advisor can give you; how much experience and training you have already had.

The Arizona/Nevada HSST/CDA Program hopes that you find your participation in CDA a valuable and practical training experience. We would appreciate any suggestions you may have for improvements in the training program and in this module.

PROVIDING FOR INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

CDA TRAINING MODULE #21

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This module relates to the following CDA Competencies:*

C. BUILD POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT AND INDIVIDUAL STRENGTH
(see items 6 and 7)

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*For reference, see the Arizona HSST/CDA "CDA Assessment"

PROVIDING FOR INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

Module #8, Techniques for Observing Children, is a prerequisite for this module.

Providing for individual differences is both the most important and the most difficult of the classroom teacher's responsibilities. Individualizing the program is vital if the needs of each individual child are to be met. Providing activities and experiences appropriate for each child, however, requires a level of teaching skill that many teachers with years of experience have not attained.

Individualizing your program means first knowing each child as an individual: his abilities, interests, fears, needs, wants, and limitations. Individualizing also means providing for each child activities, materials, attention, successes, challenges, social situations, privacy, and growth experiences which are appropriate for the individual child.

The techniques for getting to know each child thoroughly are described in Module #8. This module provides some additional observation tools and techniques, and gives some ways to organize your child records in ways that will be helpful in individualizing your program. Also in this module you will learn some special techniques for individualizing your program; you will also learn when individualizing means individual activities and when group activities may be appropriate.

The key to individualizing your program is teamwork. The entire teaching team (teachers, aides, and any other adults who have regular contact with children in your classroom) must work closely together, sharing information and observations, planning, team-teaching, providing individual attention, and evaluating.

Providing for each child as an individual, as a whole person, as a unique being, may be the most difficult task you have attempted as a teacher; it will also be the most rewarding.

OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, ASSESSMENT

CDA Intern's Name_____

Date of Entry_____Date of Completion_____

OBJECTIVES

1. The intern will understand the importance of the teacher's need to make assessments of the strengths, limitations, and needs of individual children.

ASSESSMENT

_____
date/initial

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Read the Study Guide Section I.

   a. Discuss (or write) the answers to these questions:

      1. In what four areas is each child unique?

      2. What are some benefits of knowing each child well?

      3. Why is it important that assessments be a team effort by the staff?

   b. Discuss (or write about) these statement Do you agree or disagree? Why?

      1. "Sue and Barbara are just alike in their work habits."

      2. "Joe walks with a limp and this will affect his participation in some activities."

OBJECTIVES

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

3. "We should force Jo-Ann to socialize with children in a group so she'll learn to like it."

4. "Carlos is afraid to be alone. We will be sure to have someone with him all the time until he feels more secure."

c. Discuss (or write about) these questions: Could your staff improve in making assessments as a team? How?

2. The intern will gather important up-to-date information on children through contacts with other staff members, parents, and other persons who know the child.

2. Read the Study Guide Section II and answer the Questions. There is space provided.

a. Discuss how you presently get information on the following: family background, health history, children's interests, and special needs. How could you improve these systems?

ASSESSMENT

_____
date/initial

b. Pick three children in your center who attend regularly. You will follow through with these children for the entire module. Do the following:

1. Plan a meeting with the staff. Share information concerning the three children. Make notes and keep them in special folders.

2. Keep a record of all contacts with the parents of the three children, both formal and informal, and what you learned. (See sample form in Supplement.)

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
	3. Have a list of possible goals for preschool children. Ask the parents to check the five that are most important to them.
3. The intern will record this information in an objective and confidential manner. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	3. Read the Study Guide Section III. a. Keep all information relating to the three children in special individual folders. Check their folders to see if these items are included: 1. Observation notes or forms 2. Examples of child's work 3. Home Visit Reports 4. Notes on other parent contacts 5. Enrollment and emergency forms 6. Health forms 7. Anything else relevant to the child. (If your program requires that any of these be kept elsewhere, check to see if they are there.) b. Observe a child for five minutes and write down everything he/she says and does. Review your notes with your advisor and discuss how objective you were. c. Discuss the importance of keeping information confidential.
4. The intern will make an assessment of the strengths, limitations, and needs of individual children. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	4. Read the Study Guide Section IV. a. Complete Module #8, "Making Observations of Individual Children." <u>This is required</u>. b. Make observations of the three children you have selected. Observe each child at least <u>three</u> times. One of your three observations should be a time observation of five minutes. Concentrate on social and emotional behavior. Another should be a time check done every 15 minutes to see where the child is working. A third should be a collection of anecdotal notes made during one day concerning the child's intellectual and physical activities. (Forms provided in Supplement.)

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
	c. Review all information concerning each child, including observations, parent contacts, staff meeting notes, all forms, etc.
	d. Summarize your findings about each of the three children, using all available information. Use the format given in the Supplement.
5. The intern will identify the children who have needs requiring special attention.	5. Read the Study Guide Section V and answer Questions.
	a. Use the "indicators for further assessment" in Section V, G. Observe the entire class several times and list any children who fit one or more indicators.
	b. Make two lists:
	1. Children who have already been diagnosed as having a Special Need.
	2. Children who you suspect as having a Special Need. Why?
	c. Discuss: What can you assume about the intelligence of these children? Why?
	1. Child who talks "baby talk."
	2. Child who speaks only Spanish.
	3. Child whose parents are on Welfare.

ASSESSMENT

_____
date/initial

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
6. The intern will have knowledge of the appropriate resource persons to contact for help in diagnosing and dealing with Special Needs, and for family referrals, and will make use of these resource persons.	6. Read the Study Guide Section VI and answer Questions.
ASSESSMENT	a. Keep a list or file of resource persons in your area who can be contacted for help in diagnosing or dealing with Special Needs in the areas of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional. Each entry should include:
_____	1. Name
date/initial	2. Adress and phone number
	3. Services available
	4. How to contact them
	b. Review your list of children who have been diagnosed as having Special Needs. Which resource people were contacted? Was it valuable to the child, to you, or to his parents?
	c. Review your list of children you suspect of having Special Needs. Which resource persons should you contact in each case? Begin the procedure. (Check first with head teacher and/or Director for correct procedure.)
	d. Name two resources from your list that would be appropriate to provide training; one for staff, one for parents.

OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
7. The intern will develop individualized programs to deal with the needs of individual children in the classroom by:		7. a. Read the Study Guide Section VII, Part A and answer Questions.
a. Outlining appropriate goals for individual children.	_____ date/initial	1. Think of a simple task appropriate to preschool children (such as knowing three colors or hanging your coat in your cubby). It should be a task you would be comfortable teaching.
		a. Break the task down into developmental steps, from easiest to most difficult.
		b. Think of three children you have chosen to work with. Where does each child fit into the breakdown of steps right now? What is a realistic goal for each of them?
		2. Review your assessment summaries for the three children. For each child, list at least three goals you can have realistically for the near future.
		3. Discuss (or write about):
		a. What can happen if you expect too much from a child? Too little?
		b. What are some reasons why all four-year olds do not perform the same?

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
b. Using motivational techniques appropriate to individual children.	b. Read Study Guide Section VII, Part B and answer Questions.
ASSESSMENT	1. Discuss with your advisor: What is inward motivation? Why would a child not have inward motivation? What techniques could you use then? Give examples.
_____ date/initial	2. Decide what would be an appropriate way to motivate these children:
	a. George loves cowboys. Your objective is for George to re-tell a story in his own words.
	b. Pat enjoys playing with dolls. Your objective is for Pat to learn to count objects to five.
	c. Joe has a best friend in the class, Roy. Your objective is for Joe to walk the balance beam.
	3. Think of the three children you have chosen, and review their assessment summaries.
	a. List one or two interests of each.
	b. Using your goals from #1b in part a (or another objective), decide what would be a good motivational technique for each of the three.

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
c. **Using materials appropriate to individual children.** **ASSESSMENT** _____ **date/initial**	c. Read Study Guide Section VII, Part C, and answer Questions. 1. Discuss (or write about): What are the four criteria for materials? That is, what do they have to be in order to be appropriate to a child? 2. Observe your room for a few minutes. Write down the initials of children (including the three you will work with) and the material they are working with. Does the material fit the four criteria, making it appropriate to that child? 3. Review the objective and motivation technique you decided upon for each child. Choose appropriate materials for each one and gather them (make them if necessary).
d. **Participating in frequent one-to-one activities with individual children.** **ASSESSMENT** _____ **date/initial**	d. Read Study Guide Section VII, Part D. 1. Discuss (or write about): What are four benefits of working with a child on a one-to-one basis? 2. Keep a record for two weeks of the times you work with children individually. There should be at least one entry for each day. Use the form in the Supplement. (These are planned, not casual, interactions.) 3. In the two-week period, include a one-to-one interaction with each of the three children you have chosen to work with. Use the objective, motivation technique and materials you have already chosen (or another, if you wish), and carry out an activity to meet your objective.

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
e. Providing opportunities for individual work. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	e. Read Study Guide Section VII, Part E. 1. Discuss (or write about): What are some benefits to the child of working individually? 2. Observe the three children you have been working with for one day. Make a note of each time the child works individually, and include the amount of time, the activity, the materials, and the value. Use the form in the Supplement. 3. Make up at least one individual learning kit based on one appropriate concept. It should be interesting and self-explanatory to the child. See ideas in the Supplement. 4. Observe your classroom environment. Are there any "private places" for children? How many? What are they? Plan and create at least one for your room. See Supplement for ideas.
f. Providing opportunities for children to participate in group activities on their own level. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	f. Read Study Guide Section VII, Part F, and answer Questions. 1. Discuss (or write about): What is the most important value in group activities? What is different about the way children participate in group activities? How can you include non-participating children in a group activity? 2. Observe the three children you have been working with in a large group activity. Note the following: How the child participates, what you think he/she gets out of the activity, how the adult in charge deals with the child, and how the situation could be improved. A form is provided in the Supplement.

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
	3. Plan and carry out a large group activity which includes the three children you have been working with. Plan how you will include them and what you will expect from them Afterwards, note how successful you were. A form is provided in the Supplement.
8. The intern will be continually aware of the progress of individual children.	8. Read Study Guide Section VIII. a. Observe each of the three children you have been working with when they are learning a new task. Use the form in the Supplement and answer the questions. Later, ask yourself these questions: If the child had a problem, did you pinpoint it? What was it? What can you do (another activity) to help the child learn that concept? b. Observe the entire class when they are involved in learning activities. Use the form in the Supplement to answer questions, and indicate what you could do in that situation.

STUDY GUIDE

I. To do the best teaching job possible for every child, it is necessary to make assessments of individual children.

A. Every child is a unique individual, different from each of the other children in your center, and deserving to be known by you completely.

1. Intellectually, each child learns at his own rate and style. Each comes to you with differing abilities and past experiences.

2. Physically, each child is a different size and has varying motor skills. Each is to some degree healthy or unhealthy, and may have specific physical problems.

3. Socially, each child has his own preferences in people and activities. Each has different past experiences with groups and discipline.

4. Emotionally, each child comes to you with an individual view of himself and his world. Each has a style of dealing with feelings and situations.

B. By observing and gathering information in other ways, you can get a good picture of each child as an individual, with differences from, and similarities to, the other children.

1. Knowing each child well gives you the opportunity to provide him with exactly the experiences he needs to meet the goals you have for him.

2. Knowing a child well gives him the opportunity to learn all he can while feeling comfortable about it.

3. Knowing each child well makes it easier for you to plan (on a yearly, weekly, and daily basis) and to evaluate.

4. Knowing each child well will help you to maintain good group management.

5. Knowing each child well will add much to the self-concept of individual children.

C. It is important that assessments be a team effort on the part of the entire staff.

1. Each person's input is valuable since each sees the child at different times and has unique information.

2. Each staff member needs all of the information, since each should be actively involved with the children.

3. Total staff involvement in assessments makes planning and evaluation easier.

4. Even though all staff members may contribute to assessments, it is usually the responsibility of one person (the head teacher in many cases) to keep the information together and do the paperwork.

II. Important and up-to-date information must be gathered in order to make a complete assessment and provide an individualized program.

A. An important part of an assessment is the information gathered from other staff members.

1. Staff members should meet periodically (perhaps for an hour each Friday) to share their child observations and other information . This meeting is usually followed by lesson planning, so the staff can use whay they have learned to plan an individualized program.

2. Staff members can also share information informally at the end of the program day or any other time when no other people are present.

3. Staff members often know much about a child's family background. They should feel free to share important information that may help in the classroom, while maintaining the professional and confidential staff relationship.

4. Remember that the point is to facilitate learning in all areas, so information shared should be relevant to this goal.

5. While all of the children need the staff's attention, concentration should be on those children who require special attention at this time.

B. Another important source of assessment information is parents and other family members.

1. Enrollment forms contain important information concerning health problems, family size, financial status, etc., that can help the staff determine the needs of the children.

2. Informal contacts are probably the most helpful in obtaining information. Taking a couple of minutes to speak to parents when they bring or pick up their children can give you an opportunity to ask a question while it is fresh in your mind.

EXAMPLE: You notice that Carlos is avoiding painting. You might want to ask his mother if he has had experience with paints.

QUESTION: What are two answers Carlos' mother might give? For each one, decide how you would use that information to plan for Carlos. Include his parents if necessary.

3. Home visits are another good way to gather information if parents feel at ease with you. It is sometimes helpful to go with a specific reason (to ask parents to help on a field trip, thank them for a favor, or to help fill out a form). (See Module #10 for more information in this area.)

4. Planned conferences with parents give more opportunity for you to learn about the child's needs and parents' goals.

   EXAMPLE: "Does Sarah talk about school at home?" "Is there any special way you'd like us to try to help Sarah?"

   QUESTION: What might be her mother's answer to the two questions? How would you use that information to plan for Sarah?

5. Parents meetings provide opportunities to see many parents at once. This is helpful for getting information through forms -- health history, parents' goals for their children, etc.

C. Contacts with other people who know the child can help in making a complete assessment.

1. Nurses, doctors, dentists, and clinic personnel will have valuable information about a child's health status. This is gathered in routine examinations and kept in children's folders.

2. Parents should be made aware of your contact with other people regarding their child. This should happen before contact is made.

III. Any information concerning a child should be recorded in an objective and confidential manner.

A. All information should be recorded as soon as possible, to be sure it is complete and correct. (A tape recorder can be helpful, but is appropriate only some of the time.)

B. All information should be put in a child's individual folder. This includes observation notes and forms, examples of children's work, notes on contacts with parents and others, enrollment and health forms, home visit reports, etc. It may be helpful to keep two folders for each child:

1. An "official" folder -- includes all material required by program.

2. A "classroom" folder -- includes all other material.

C. All reports should be objective. This means writing down only the facts, not your own interpretations or opinions.

1. Remember, "labeling is disabling." To say a child walks with a limp (which interferes only slightly with physical activities such as running and hopping) is an objective observation. But to say the child is physically handicapped is labeling falsely. This is unfair to the child.

2. See Module #8 for more information in this area.

D. All reports should be confidential.

1. This means that only staff, parents, and people approved by parents will see and discuss the contents of a child's folder.

2. It also means that a discussion of the material does not take place when other adults or children are present.

3. Nothing prejudicial concerning a child should be transmitted to another school. Share only objective facts.

4. Do not forward any records to another school unless the parents request it.

5. There are laws covering the confidentiality of records now. If you follow these rules you will be within the law.

IV. Making assessments of individual children is not difficult if you follow these steps.

A. Observe the child extensively.

1. See Module #8 for information in this area.

2. Completion of Module #8 is a pre-requisite for this module.

B. Gather information about the child.

1. Use the ideas outlined in Section II concerning contacts with staff members, parents, and other persons.

2. Record and keep the information with your observation reports.

C. Summarize your findings.

1. Some people have forms for this that are provided by their program or that they have made themselves.

2. A simple method would be this: Divide a paper into four sections and label them intellectual, physical, social, emotional. In each section list the child's "Strengths," "Limitations," "Needs." (See Supplement for sample.)

a. Strengths -- those skills or areas in which the child is having success. Example: He can hop on one foot.

b. Limitations -- those skills or areas in which the child has not had success, and which you feel should be success areas for him. Example: He has not been able to share with other children.

c. Needs -- types of experiences he needs to have that you can provide. Example: He needs to practice matching colors.

3. Lastly, you should list the child's interests.

EXAMPLE: He likes to play with trucks, watch "Sesame Street," look at books, and be with his friend Joe Best.

D. Additional ideas --

1. Children need at least two or three weeks to adjust to the school environment and no assessment should be made until that time.

2. Assessment is a continuous process, not just something you do in September. Ideally, you will be observing and gathering information all the time. You might want to pull it all together at regular intervals, such as every two months, or three times a year (September, January, May).

3. Some programs require you to use a particular "Assessment Tool," such as the "Portage Project" or "Inventory of Developmental Tasks" (IDT). After you have completed these assessments, you will probably want to combine the information with your observations and contacts and summarize your findings as outlined above.

V. Children have special needs that must be considered in order to provide an individualized program.

A. Listed below are some special needs situations that you may encounter at some time. The list is for informational purposes only, not to provide labels.

1. Gifted -- possessing superior potential for both critical and creative thinking.

2. Emotionally disturbed -- extremely withdrawn, or acting out to the point where the child is a severe disruption or a danger.

3. Speech impaired -- speech so defective that it calls attention to itself, interferes with communication, or causes the child to be maladjusted.

4. Hard of hearing -- can understand and learn speech, with or without a hearing aid, but hearing loss is educationally significant.

5. Deaf -- hearing is insufficient for understanding speech.

6. Blind -- have so little vision that they cannot read regular size print.

7. Visually handicapped -- enough vision to read large print or regular print under limited conditions.

8. Crippled -- malformations and malfunctions of bones, joints, or muscles.

9. Health impaired -- a physical condition (other than a crippling one) that limits the child in some way or requires special attention (such as diabetes or rheumatic fever).

10. Learning disabled -- child is functioning at least one year below his age level in one or more areas (physical or language development, for example).

11. Mentally retarded -- child is functioning at least two years below his age in <u>all</u> areas.

B. It is hard to tell the difference between a learning disability (which a child will always have unless steps are taken to correct it) and a developmental lag (which will disappear in time as the child "catches up" in that area). Only an expert should make the diagnosis, as with any special need situation.

C. Keep in mind that the varying ages of the children will have an effect on their developmental levels. What is "normal" for a four-year-old may be "impossible" for a three-year-old. (See Module #9 for more information in this area.

D. The following are <u>not</u> indications of major learning problems or handicaps: economic circumstances, ethnic or cultural factors, or normal developmental lags.

1. Examples: immature speech, Indian children who speak only their own language, children from a minority culture.

2. While these children may need special attention to adapt and progress, you <u>cannot</u> assume anything about their intelligence, physical development, emotional or social behavior because of these factors alone.

3. <u>Question</u>: What kind of special attention would the children in #1 need?

E. Special needs of children will be assessed in the same way as all other assessments are made; that is, through observation and contacts with parents, staff, and other persons. However, no assessment of a special need should be considered complete without evaluation by an expert.

F. Do not make any assessments until you have all the facts.

EXAMPLE: A child may be labeled as "epileptic" but you may find that he has had only rare seizures.

EXAMPLE: A child may appear to be a slow learner because he does not recognize various shapes, colors, or objects; it may turn out that the child has a vision problem.

G. There are some very obvious indications that further assessment is needed. If you observe any of these, you should investigate further.

1. The child appears to be extremely awkward or clumsy.
2. The child is unable to take care of his basic needs -- toileting, feeding, etc.
3. The child is always agressive, defiant, hyperactive, withdrawn, worried, preoccupied or any other extreme emotional reaction.
4. The child cannot copy or imitate words, sounds, movements or gestures.
5. The child is unable or unwilling to express himself verbally (in his first language).
6. The child never turns head in direction of sound.
7. The child never talks.
8. The child's speech is not understandable (in his first language).
9. The child always holds objects close to his eyes, or squints, or bumps into things.
10. The child complains repeatedly of a physical ailment.

VI. Each community has people you can use as resources for help in diagnosing and dealing with special needs, and for family referrals.

A. Every center should have an up-to-date list or file of local resource people.

1. There should be entries in the areas of physical, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of children.

Question: Can you think of one in each area?

2. Each entry should include the following information:
   Name of person or organization
   Address and phone number
   Services provided
   Who and how to contact

3. To help in making a resource list, use existing directories (professional, public health, etc.), the local telephone book, and contacts with people.

B. The staff should make use of resource people in an appropriate manner.

1. If you suspect (with good reason) that a child has a special need, you may want to call in an expert to evaluate further.

   EXAMPLE: If you suspect that a child has a speech impairment, you would call in someone from a Speech Clinic, Easter Seal Society, etc.

   QUESTION: You suspect that a child is hard of hearing. Who would you consult?

2. If a child is definitely assessed as having a special need, you might want to consult an expert to help you with teaching techniques and other information.

   EXAMPLE: A child has a vision problem. The public health optometrist teaches you eye exercises you can help the child with.

   QUESTION: A child is mentally retarded. Who could help you and how?

3. You may want to refer parents to a particular resource person for information, evaluation, or counseling.

   EXAMPLE: A child is extremely overweight. You refer the parents to a local nutritionist for diet counseling.

   QUESTION: A child has serious emotional problems. Who would you refer the parents to and why?

4. You may want to invite a resource person to give a presentation as part of in-service training for part or all of the staff and/or parents.

   EXAMPLE: The parents are interested in behavior modification as a method of changing child behavior. You invite two university psychologists to speak for and against this method.

   QUESTION: The staff is interested in the validity of intelligence and developmental tests given to the children. Who would you invite and what would they discuss?

5. Always notify parents of your intention to call in a resource person regarding their child. In some cases, you may want to have the resource person counsel the parents.

C. In some programs, all referrals (of children to agencies and of parents to resource people) are handled through one central agency. Or it may be that all referrals go through a Social Services Specialist or Coordinator. It is to your advantage to cooperate fully with this agency or person, but obviously it will be more helpful to everyone if you are aware of all the alternatives and keep contact with resource persons. Your input cannot be minimized without hurting the child.

VII. An individualized program for a specific child is based on the following: appropriate goals, motivation techniques, and materials for that child; frequent one-to-one contact; and opportunities to do individual work and participate in group activities on his own level.

This section is concerned with why these things are important and how you can put them to work in your classroom.

A. It is necessary to have appropriate goals for individual children.

1. Every child can attain as much as he is capable of if given the proper guidance.

   a. Studies have proven that children will perform as well as their teachers expect them to. (Children were chosen at random and their teachers were told they were outstanding students. The children became outstanding students.)

   b. If you expect too little from a child, you will be wasting his untapped capabilities and talents. He may begin to feel that you are right, that he really can't do things. He may feel frustration or boredom, and his behavior may reflect these feelings.

c. If you expect too much from a child, he will experience failure. He will feel that he can't live up to your standards, and may stop trying. He may feel that he can't live up to anyone's standards.

2. Even though children have similar capabilities at various ages, children of the same age will stil show variations in their learning levels.

   a. For example, while most four-year-olds will be able to cut on a line with fair accuracy, there will be some who find this very difficult and others who can use scissors much better than this.

   b. The differences may be due to the amount of exposure or practice a child has had, a normal developmental lag, a perceptual weakness, or a number of other reasons.

   c. The importance of this is that it is impossible for you to expect the same performance from <u>all</u> of the four-year-olds (or three-year olds or five-year-olds).

   d. <u>Question</u>: Can you think of at least one child who performs a task better than the other children his age? One who performs not so well?

3. Goals for children should be broken down into steps from the easy to the more difficult. These are easier for you to plan for than overall, generalized goals. This is called <u>task analysis</u>.

   a. Here is a task analysis of cutting with scissors:

      1. Hold scissors properly.
      2. Open and close scissors smoothly.
      3. Cause scissors to cut paper.
      4. Direct scissors to where you want them to go.
      5. Follow a straight line.
      6. Follow a curved line.
      7. Follow a combination of straight and curved lines.
      8. Be precise cutting any figure.

   b. You will probably not have any children who can accomplish the last steps; I have included them to show the logical sequence.

   c. The child will not be able to do the advanced steps until he has mastered the simpler tasks.

      <u>EXAMPLE</u>: He cannot follow a straight line (#5) if he hasn't already mastered steps 1, 2, 3, and 4.

   d. Determine at which level a child is functioning and take him through the steps one at a time. Take as much time as the child needs and give him as much practice as he needs.

EXAMPLE: John can hold scissors properly, open and close scissors smoothly, and cause scissors to cut paper. The obvious goal for John is: direct scissors to go where you want them to. John can practice this skill in many ways until he has mastered it.

4. It should be obvious to you by now that general long-range goals (such as "the children will all be able to use scissors to cut any figure by the end of the year") are useless on a day-to-day basis, except as a starting point in breaking down the task.

   a. It is also obvious that you cannot spend all your time practicing task analysis with every goal you have for your children. Once you know how, however, it becomes simple to use this method daily <u>without</u> a great deal of time or effort.

      <u>EXAMPLE</u>: In the first weeks of school, you observe that Susan cannot put on and zip up her jacket. You think to yourself, "If I were to break down this task, what would be the next logical step?" And there you have an appropriate goal for Susan.

      <u>QUESTION</u>: Pick a goal and use task analysis to break it down into steps. Can you think of which "step" three children in your class are on?

   b. Another obvious point is that you do not have the time to be doing this constantly for every child, one at a time. You will notice that several children are on the same "step" at the same time. These children can be guided into activities together which concentrate on the appropriate skill or goal. (See Module #6 for information in this area.)

B. It is necessary to use appropriate motivation techniques for individual children so that each will be enthused for learning.

   1. <u>Inward motivation</u> depends on these factors: curiosity; the urge to be able to do something; and the satisfaction of doing it well.

      a. A child's <u>natural curiosity</u> is a real asset to both him and you. He comes to you with it and the best you can do for him is to encourage his curiosity and not stifle it.

      b. Inward motivation continues as long as there is success. A child who has no hope of success is not motivated to try.

      c. It stands to reason that a child needs to <u>know</u> when he has done well. Praise for a job well done can achieve this, but remember that a child needs to know in <u>himself</u> that he has done well or he will always rely on others for assurance.

      d. These points are general to all children. If a child is not inwardly motivated, you must observe this and be prepared to help.

2. For those children who are not inwardly motivated, there are other ways to motivate them.

   a. One very successful motivation technique is to capitalize on a child's interests and use them in all areas of the curriculum.

      EXAMPLE: A child who enjoys trains but does not take part in dramatic play activities might participate if a train were set up.

      QUESTION: Can you think of a child who has a very strong interest? What is it? How can you use it to interest him in other activities?

   b. Another technique is to capitalize on past success in an area to get the child to go further.

      EXAMPLE: If a child walks forward well on the balance beam, a reminder of this success and a practice session may give him the willingness to try walking backwards.

      QUESTION: Can you think of a child who had a successful experience recently? What was it? How can you use it to motivate the child?

   c. Another technique is to capitalize on how a child feels at the moment.

      EXAMPLE: If a child is very restless, it may be a good time to suggest a ball game or other active game.

      QUESTION: A child complains of being hungry. What activities might he be highly motivated to take part in?

3. Here are some general guidelines for motivation:

   a. A child needs to feel that adults like him and believe in his abilities.

   b. A child needs to be in an environment that is free from fear and conflict.

   c. The element of surprise is motivating. A child is curious because he has an unsolved question, and expects to find an answer (the "surprise").

   d. Comparing one child to another is NOT a good way to motivate. While it may get results, it will surely damage the child's feelings of adequacy and friendliness. However, reinforcing one child's positive actions may motivate others to follow suit.

   e. It is more valuable to do something because we enjoy it than because someone has said we must, or because we must be faster or better than someone else. Competition does not promote inward motivation.

      EXAMPLE: We dress ourselves because there is satisfaction in being independent, and we do it quickly so that we can go on to another activity. We don't do it to set a speed record or to surpass someone else.

   f. Remember that you as an adult are a model for a child to follow. Your actions (trying new things, eating lunch, etc.) can be a motivating factor. You are only a "failure" if you give up without trying; instead of hiding your mistakes and difficulties, use them to show the children that trying can pay off.

C. It is important to use materials that are appropriate to the needs of individual children.

   1. Materials appeal to a child (and motivate him) because he likes them.

      EXAMPLE: One child may enjoy counting better with dolls, another with blocks.

      QUESTION: Can you think of a child who likes a particular material in your center? How could you use this material in other areas or ways?

2. Materials must be suitable to a child's physical needs.

   EXAMPLE: A small child may need to use a small slide before he feels comfortable on a bigger one.

   QUESTION: There is a child who cannot see well. What special requirements do materials need to fulfill for him?

3. Materials must be suitable to the child's ability in that area.

   EXAMPLE: A child can cause scissors to cut paper, but cannot cut on a straight line. He needs a piece of paper with straight lines, not a figure of a snowman, to practice on.

   QUESTION: George can match like colors, but cannot identify any of them by name. When you work with him, which is more appropriate: a set of blocks of two colors, or a set of blocks of eight colors.

4. All children need to use materials they can "trust". Games that don't work as they should, toys that fall apart, blocks that splinter, homemade materials that are sloppily done -- all of these will turn a child off before any learning can take place.

D. Frequent one-to-one activities are an important part of an individualized program.

   1. Working with one child gives you an opportunity to observe him very closely.

      a. You can assess his ability in the area at which he is working, and also in more general areas (such as language development).

      b. You can join him at the activity, or structure an acitivity and ask him if he'd like to join you. Remember, he should have the privilege of saying "no".

      c. You should try to plan one-to-one activities around a child's abilities, not just his weak areas. Otherwise, he will think you only come around to give "extra help" with things he "can't do."

2. Working with one child gives him an opportunity to be the singular object of your attention instead of just part of the group.

   a. He can "show off" skills he has learned.

   b. He can ask for help with a skill.

   c. He can express himself about the work he is doing or anything else.

3. Each child should have a one-to-one contact with an adult each day. These may be brief and informal (an exchange about his trip to school, for instance), but every few days or once a week contact should be longer and more personal.

   a. This may sound difficult to accomplish, but if you have two or three (more with volunteers) adults and twenty children, and each adult has at least one lengthy contact each day, it won't take many days to reach every child.

   b. The more "open" your classroom is, the easier this will be, since adults will be free from "group leader" roles to devote more time to individual children.

E. Individual children should be provided with opportunities for individual work.

1. Working alone gives a child time to proceed at his own pace, to stop and think, to experiment, to seek answers to his own questions. It fosters independence and responsibility. It provides an atmosphere without pressure, where a child can work without worrying about success or failure, about "keeping up," or about "what others think."

2. Independent work requires suitable materials.

   a. Materials need to be suitable in two ways: in number (are there enough?) and in appropriateness (are they interesting and self-explanatory to a child?).

   b. One way to meet the "suitable" criteria, is to create learning kits. These are made to be used individually and you can make as many as you need. Each kit centers around a concept (rough and smooth, for example) and is easily assembled from available materials. (See Supplement for resources which are excellent in this area.)

3. Independent work requires privacy.

   a. This means having cubbies, carrels, hiding places, quiet areas, and the respect of others.

   b. Ideas for makeshift "private places" can be found in the Supplement.

F. In a group activity, individual children should be given opportunities to participate on their own level.

1. What each child gets out of an activity is different; it is also true that what each child puts in to an activity will be different.

EXAMPLE: During "circle time," Allen gets enjoyment from listening to others tell their stories and he learns a lot this way; what he puts into it is his attention and eagerness to listen to others.

QUESTION: During "circle time," Anne likes to share with others and she learns how to express herself, wait her turn and feel pride in herself. How does she do this; that is, what does she put in to the activity?

2. Children who do not like to actively participate but like to watch can be encouraged to take a role that will include them in a way that is comfortable for them.

EXAMPLES: Being the "audience," playing the record player for musical chairs, guessing while others role play, etc.

QUESTION: Think of at least one child who does not actively participate in one or more activities. How can you include them in a comfortable way?

3. The important thing in group activities is usually not the activity, but the feeling of belonging, the socialization that goes on. A child can benefit only if he has the choice of how to participate. Forcing him to perform in a particular way (or to perform at all) does not produce learning; you CANNOT force a child to learn.

VIII. In an individualized program, you must be always aware of the progress of individual children.

A. If you are carrying on a continual program of observation, you will have no trouble seeing where the problems are. (See Module #8.)

B. If you use a "task analysis" approach, you will always be able to see where a child is and where he goes next.

C. Here are some ways to assess progress while the child is learning a new task:

1. Simple observation

   a. Is he totally successful? Partially? Not at all?

   b. Does he want to continue? Give up?

   c. Is he stuck at a particular point?

   d. Is he indicating a need for help?

2. Asking questions

   a. Are you enjoying it?

   b. Do you understand what I want you (or you need) to do?

   c. Which part is hard?

3. Performance

   a. Ask him to show you how to do it.

   b. Ask him to show you the first step, the second, and so on, until you have identified the problem area.

   c. Ask him to do something easier; harder.

D. Ask yourself these questions as you watch various children in the room:

1. Does any child appear overly anxious about his work?

2. Does any child appear bored? Is there a way to increase his interest?

3. Do the children get frequent and specific feedback on their work?

4. Would raising or lowering the difficulty of a task increase a child's chance for success?

5. Is any child finishing a task much faster (or slower) than the others?

6. Is any child acting in a disruptive manner (indicating boredom or frustration)?

SUPPLEMENT

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PARENT CONTACTS

Date	Child's Name	Type of Contact	What You Learned

TIME CHECK

	NAME	NAME	NAME
8:00			
8:15			
8:30			
8:45			
9:00			
9:15			
9:30			
9:45			
10:00			
10:15			
10:30			
10:45			
11:00			
11:15			
11:30			
11:45			
12:00			
12:15			
12:30			
12:45			
1:00			
1:15			
1:30			
1:45			
2:00			

ANECDOTAL NOTES
On Intellectual and Physical Activities

Child's Name_____ Date_____

Activity:

What Child Does & Says:

Activity:

What Child Does & Says:

Activity:

What Child Does & Says:

Activity:

What Child Does & Says:

Activity:

What Child Does & Says:

ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Child's Name_____ Date_____

INTELLECTUAL:

Strengths --

Limitations --

Needs --

PHYSICAL:

Strengths --

Limitations --

Needs --

SOCIAL:

Strengths --

Limitations --

Needs --

EMOTIONAL:

Strengths --

Limitations --

Needs --

INTERESTS:

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INDIVIDUAL WORK WITH CHILDREN

Date:

Child's Name:

Objective:

Motivation Techniques:

Materials:

Results:

Date:

Child's Name:

Objective:

Motivation Techniques:

Materials:

Results:

CHILDREN WORKING ALONE

	ACTIVITY	AMOUNT OF TIME	MATERIALS	VALUE
NAME				
NAME				
NAME				

IDEAS FOR INDIVIDUAL LEARNING KITS

EXAMPLE: Concept "Rough & Smooth"

In one large box put these materials:

a. One smaller box, with a piece of "rough" material pasted on it.
b. One smaller box, with a piece of "smooth" material pasted on it.
c. A number of pieces of material, equally divided between "rough" and "smooth." They should be clearly one or the other.

EXAMPLE: Concept "Matching Colors"

In one large box put these materials:

a. Smaller boxes (no more than eight), each covered (painted, papered, etc.) in one clear and distinct color.
b. A number of small objects that match in color the small boxes.

Many examples for simple homemade learning kits can be found in the book Workjobs. See bibliography for details.

IDEAS FOR PRIVATE PLACES

1. Put a curtain around the bottom of a table.
2. Build a hogan from any available materials.
3. Clean out the bottom of a closet.
4. Use large packing boxes -- imagination is your only limit here.
5. Make portable carrels from cardboard to be used on tables or the floor.
6. Make a corner tent with material and two sticks for props.
7. Build a simple loft and enclose the bottom.
8. Use a bookcase or other room divider as a wall and extend study carrel walls from it with cardboard.
9. Make a playhouse.
10. Have large, put-together blocks available for the children to create their own private places.
11. Turn your office into a reading room or quiet area.
12. Look at your own room and determine where space is available for some private places.

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LARGE GROUP PARTICIPATION

Activity_____ Number of Children_____

Name_____

How does child participate?

What does child get out of activity?

How does adult deal with child?

How could situation be improved?

Name_____

How does child participate?

What does child get out of activity?

How does adult deal with child?

How could situation be improved?

Name_____

How does child participate?

What does child get out of activity?

How does adult deal with child?

How could situation be improved?

INTERN-PLANNED LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY

Activity_____ Date_____

Name_____

How You Will Include Child:

What You Will Expect From Him/Her:

(After) How Successful Were You?

Name_____

How You Will Include Child:

What You Will Expect From Him/Her:

(After) How Successful Were You?

Name_____

How You Will Include Child:

What You Will Expect From Him/Her:

(After) How Successful Were You?

CHILD IN A NEW LEARNING TASK

Child's Name_____ Date_____

Activity_____

Observe:

1. Is he/she totally successful? Partially? Not at all?

2. Does he/she want to continue? Give up?

3. Is he/she stuck at a particular point?

4. Is he/she indicating a need for help?

Ask Questions: (Record child's answers.)

1. Are you enjoying it?

2. (If there appears to be a problem) Do you understand what I want you (or you need) to do?

3. Which part is hard?

Performance:

1. Ask him/her to show you how to do it. What happens?

2. (If there is a problem) Ask him/her to show you the first step, the second, and so on, until you have identified the problem area.

3. Ask him/her to do something easier; harder.

OBSERVATION OF CLASS

1. Does any child appear overly anxious about his/her work? (Use initials and describe actions.)

2. Does any child appear bored? Is there a way to increase his/her interest?

3. Do the children get frequent and specific feedback on their work?

4. Would raising or lowering the difficulty of a task increase any child's chance for success?

5. Is any child finishing a task much faster (or slower) than the others?

6. Is any child acting in a disruptive manner? (Indicates boredom or frustration.)

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Baratta - Lorton, Mary. Workjobs, 1972, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company. An excellent book which shows you how to make individual learning kits easily from found materials. Highly recommended.

Clure, Beth. Why Didn't I Think Of That?, 1971, Bowman, Glendale, California. A teacher's resource book for Early Childhood Education. The chapter on "Individuality" (pp. 88-89) is very helpful in providing activities that stress the individual.

"Discovering Individual Differences" (a film). 25 min. B&W. New York University Film Library, 26 Washington Place, New York. By a case history approach, it shows how teachers can identify and meet the individual needs of their students.

Hunter, Madeline C. Individualization of Instruction. The most helpful chapter is "Individualization as a Process and a Method" (pp. 36-43).

Mack, Don. "Privacy: A Child's Need to be Alone in the Classroom," TEACHER magazine. Vol. 93, No. 6, Feb. 1976, pp. 52 and 53. One teacher's methods for providing "private places" in his classroom.

Model Indian Preschool for Handicapped Children. Handicapped Children: Procedures and Materials for Head Start Programs (Arizona Affiliated Tribes), 1973, University of Arizona, Tucson.

Pitcher, Evelyn, G., et. al. Helping Young Children Learn, 1974, Charles E. Merril Publishing Company, Columbus, Ohio. The important chapter here is nine, "Learning Problems in the Classroom" (pp. 167-186). In it guidelines for assessment are described, and help is given for providing for special needs.

Ward, Evangeline H. Early Childhood Education, 1968, F. A. Owen Publishing Co., Dansville, New York. Approaches, materials and equipment for the preschool. Pages 6-13 deal with guiding the living-learning of one child and the group.

Yamamoto, Kaoru (Editor). The Child and His Image, Houghton-Miflin Company, Boston. Self-concept in the early years. Of particular importance are Chapter 3 (pp. 54-79), "The Developing Self: Nurturance in School," and Chapter 4 (pp. 80-120), "To Fathom the Self: Appraisal in School."